

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Van Zandt County Courthouse

Other name/site number: NA

Name of related multiple property listing: NA

2. Location

Street & number: 121 East Dallas Street

City or town: Canton

State: Texas

County: Van Zandt

Not for publication: ☐Vicinity: ☐

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this

☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria.

I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following levels of significance:

☐ national ☐ statewide ☐ localApplicable National Register Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D_____
Signature of certifying official / Title

State Historic Preservation Officer

Date

Texas Historical Commission

State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria._____
Signature of commenting or other official_____
Date_____
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

☐ entered in the National Register☐ determined eligible for the National Register☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.☐ removed from the National Register☐ other, explain: __________
Signature of the Keeper_____
Date of Action

Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

<input type="checkbox"/>	Private
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - Federal

Category of Property

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	-	buildings
-	-	sites
-	-	structures
1	-	objects
2	0	total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register:

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions: Government: courthouse

Current Functions: Government: courthouse

7. Description

Architectural Classification: Modern Movement: Modern Classical

Principal Exterior Materials: Stone/limestone, marble

Narrative Description (see continuation sheets 7-12)

Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

X	A	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
	B	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
X	C	Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
	D	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations: NA

Areas of Significance: Architecture, Government

Period of Significance: 1937-1966

Significant Dates: 1937

Significant Person (only if criterion b is marked): NA

Cultural Affiliation (only if criterion d is marked): NA

Architect/Builder: Voelker & Dixon, architects; Eckert-Fair Construction, Builder/Contractor

Narrative Statement of Significance (see continuation sheets 13-19)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography (see continuation sheet xx)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State historic preservation office (*Texas Historical Commission, Austin*)
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository:

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): NA

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: approximately 0.75 acres

Coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: NA

1. Latitude: 32.556215° Longitude: -95.863074°

Verbal Boundary Description: A full city block within Canton's downtown commercial district; bounded by State Highway 64 (E Dallas St.) (north), S Buffalo St. (west), E Tyler St. (south), and S Capitol St. (east).

Boundary Justification: Nomination includes all resources within legal property boundary.

11. Form Prepared By

Name / title: Stephen F. Austin, Federal Programs Historian, with sections adapted from the Van Zandt County Courthouse Master Plan by Wharry Engineering.

Organization: Texas Historical Commission

Street & number: PO Box 12276

City or Town: Austin **State:** Texas **Zip Code:** 78711

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Telephone: 215-463-6046

Additional Documentation

Maps (see continuation sheets xx)

Additional items (see continuation sheets xx)

Photographs (see continuation sheets xx)

Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

Van Zandt County Courthouse
Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas
Photographed by Elvis Allen

Photo 1
North elevation
Camera facing north

Photo 2
Northeast elevation
Camera facing southwest

Photo 3
Southeast elevation
Camera facing northwest

Photo 4
Southwest elevation
Camera facing southeast

Photo 5
West elevation
Camera facing west

Photo 6
Northeast elevation
Camera facing northeast

Photo 7
South elevation
Camera facing north

Photo 8
East elevation
Camera facing west

Photo 9
East elevation
Camera facing west

Photo 10
North elevation
Camera facing south

Photo 21
First floor, Terrazzo flooring
Camera facing east

Photo 11
South elevation
Camera facing north

Photo 12
North elevation
Camera facing west

Photo 13
West elevation
Panel carvings

Photo 14
North elevation
Camera facing south

Photo 15
North elevation
Camera facing northwest

Photo 16
Southeast elevation
Camera facing north

Photo 17
North elevation
Camera facing south

Photo 18
South elevation
Camera facing north

Photo 19
West elevation
Camera facing east

Photo 20
West elevation
Camera facing east

Photo 30
District courtroom, molding
Camera facing northeast

SBR Draft

Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

Photo 22
First floor, west corridor
Camera facing west

Photo 23
East elevation
Camera facing west

Photo 24
East elevation
Camera facing west

Photo 25
West elevation
Camera facing east

Photo 26
South elevation
Camera facing north

Photo 27
East elevation
Camera facing west

Photo 28
North elevation
Camera facing south

Photo 29
West elevation
Camera facing northeast

Photo 31
South elevation
Camera facing north

Photo 32
Storage and mechanical equipment, third floor
Camera facing east

Photo 33
Former County jail, fourth floor
Camera facing east

Photo 34
Jail cell, storage
Camera facing north

Photo 35
Jail entrance, fourth floor
Camera facing east

Photo 36
Jail cells and storage,
fourth floor corridor

Photo 37
Cell door
fourth floor corridor

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

Description

The Van Zandt County Courthouse is sited on a square city block in downtown Canton, a northeast Texas city located approximately 60 miles southeast of Dallas. Designed in 1936 by Wichita Falls-based architecture firm, Voelcker & Dixon, and completed in 1937, the four-story building (with a raised basement) possesses two wings on its east and west elevations; both are three stories atop the basement, and one floor shorter than the main block. It is constructed of steel, reinforced concrete, and faced entirely in limestone. The building's Classical Moderne design is best represented in its imposing block massing and relatively austere exterior. Conservative Art Deco ornamentation, including minimal reliefs, vertical windows, and graceful angular lines, acknowledges contemporary interpretation of the Classical Moderne style. The interior spaces and finishes are largely intact, including terrazzo flooring, decorative moldings, wood framing, door hardware, granite half wall veneers, and Art Deco light fixture. The courthouse's stately exterior and attractive interior both retain a high degree of integrity.

Setting:

The Van Zandt County Courthouse is located in the heart of downtown Canton, Texas, near the geographic center of Van Zandt County. The topography of the downtown commercial district is relatively flat with gradual downward sloping toward the east. The streets are arranged in an irregular grid (a Shelbyville-related pattern)¹ and oriented slightly northeast and southwest. Concrete sidewalks and curbs define the perimeter of the property and sidewalks lead to three formal entrances sited on the east, west, and north sides of the building; a single pedestrian door located halfway below grade is the only entrance on the south façade. A shallow berm constructed of earthen infill partially covers the building's ground floor on its south, east, and north elevations, partially concealing the basement. The berm is faced in white stone pavers, creating a level lawn area due to the natural slope of the site. Sets of four mature live oak trees occupy each corner of the courthouse grounds. The primary north side of the square is characterized by two concrete half-flight staircases separated by a landing, with two ornate lamp posts atop concrete headwalls adjacent to the doorway; other features include metal planters, a flag pole, and two streetlights sited at the northeast and northwest corners of the courthouse property. A reinforced concrete handicapped-accessible entrance added in 1984 stands at ground level directly adjacent to the primary doorway on the eastside of the building. There are a total of four Texas Historical Markers located on the courthouse lawn. Two were dedicated to Judge Roberts and Judge Raines during Van Zandt County's sesquicentennial in 1998. The third recognizes the Stone Point Campground, the only confederate command to refuse surrender following the end of the war. The fourth marker commemorates early county leader John H. Reagan; all four historical markers are not counted as contributing objects. In 1999, the Van Zandt County Courthouse was designated a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark (RTHL). A medallion and plate are attached to the building near the main entrance on the north façade and are counted as a contributing object. A large and impressive Texas Centennial Monument stands at the northwest corner of the lawn. Erected in 1938, the piece is dedicated to the county's namesake, Isaac and Francis Cooke Lipscomb Van Zandt. Sculptor Waldine Amanda Tauch designed the bronze bas-relief with a Texas pink granite backdrop for the Texas Centennial in 1936 (Figure 5).² A native of Schulenberg, Texas, Tauch became a pupil of renowned sculptor Pompeo Luigi Coppini.³ Under his direction, Tauch developed a naturalistic style and strove to produce large public monuments. In 1935, after many years in New York City, she moved back to San

¹ Veselka, Robert E., and Kenneth E. Foote, *The Courthouse Square in Texas*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000), 42-45.

² Tyler Journal, "Statue Honors Early Texas Statement and Wife: Clay Model of Isaac Van Zandt Completed for County," Vol.13, No. 38, Ed. 1, *Tyler Journal*, January 14, 1938.

³ Kendall Curlee, "Tauch, Waldine Amanda," *Handbook of Texas Online*, June 2010. Accessed April 05, 2016, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fta36>.

Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

Antonio to complete several works commissioned for the Texas Centennial celebration including *First Shot Fired for Texas Independence* (1935) and a memorial to Moses Austin (1937-38). Another monument stationed at the southeast courthouse lawn is comprised of the cornerstone of the previous 1896 courthouse, topped with its former finial, a casted bronze eagle. Modern utility equipment is located on the south lawn including an emergency generator, gas meter, electrical transformer, boiler tower, and surface level water valve.

General Characteristics

The Van Zandt County Courthouse exhibits characteristics of the Classical Moderne style, with simplified, flat facades, and rectangular massing. Additionally, elements of Moderne design are present throughout the courthouse's interior and exterior. The building's long axis runs east to west, with its principal entry faces north. The courthouse has a modified rectangular footprint, with the north and south faces of the main block slightly recessed. Two marginally projecting wings flank the main block on its east and west elevations. The building features four floors atop a half-basement (hereafter referred to as the ground floor), with a total area of nearly 8,000 square feet. The ground floor is approximately two feet below the nominal grade. The concrete frame structure with concrete decks is clad in limestone with metal casement windows and aluminum spandrels. Stone belt courses, sills, and thresholds are comprised of limestone, and may be of Leuders stone.

At first glance, the courthouse appears bleak and monolithic, with an asymmetrical box-like profile and shallow relief sculptures. The overall appearance is that of a simplified temple abutted by two projecting wings. Pilasters function as pseudo columns separated by dark vertical bands of recessed casement windows and aluminum spandrels operate as voided space and reinforce the building's verticality. The entablature is simplified, with finely-detailed carvings of incised fluting. The pilasters lack capitals and integrate seamlessly into the tall stone entablature above. The building's main entry is a single full-view wood French door, topped by a fixed transom covered with vertical grille work, and framed by imposing limestone pilaster and lintel. The courthouse has a flat roof with a single-story utility penthouse visible from the ground on the south and west sides.

Elevations:

North

The primary elevation on the north side is symmetrically composed—nine narrow bays are recessed between two slightly projecting wings. The central bays are separated by non-fluted limestone pilasters that extend to the architrave, and abut the main entrance. The six bays feature six ribbons of two vertically stacked metal casement windows, divided by dark decorative aluminum spandrels, corresponding to three floors of the courthouse. Each window is topped with a vertical panel carving of a single torch at the architrave level. Three bays sited directly above the entrance possess one metal casement window each, and correspond with the second floor. Between the top windows and the entablature are cast stone panels with low-relief stylized torches. The frieze identifies the building as "Van Zandt County" with the incised words centered between carved dentils. Both outer wings correspond with the ground, first, second, and third floors. Two strips of vertical windows with aluminum spandrels, similar to those in the central bays, are topped by a sculpted panel featuring the scales of justice flanked by two fasces below the parapet. The primary entrance to the courthouse is a wooden full-view double door under a glass transom lite with decorative vertical grille work. The doorway is inset and boarded by a large limestone pilasters topped by a carved lintel. The entry is accessed by a double half-flight of concrete stairs, flanked by concrete headwalls. A vertical panel carving of fasces is sited in the limestone lintel is directly above the doorway.

South

The south elevation is also symmetrical, but exhibits a different composition than the primary north façade, with nine inset interior bays flanked by two slightly projected wings, each with two bays of stacked vertical windows with dark pilasters. Both wings correspond to the first and second floors and each bay is topped with a horizontal panel of decorative relief sculptures, with two additional panel carvings of the scales of justice stationed at the corners of each wing at the parapet level. The nine inlaid bays each contain a vertical ribbon of paired metal casement windows that correspond to the first three floors. A row of nine individual double-hung and louver style windows sits above the vertical bays, just below the parapet level, and is commensurate with the fourth floor; five of the louver windows appear to be painted gray or metal. The above lintel is fairly plain, with bands of fluting at the top. The sole entrance is below ground level and accesses the ground floor by a half-flight of concrete stairs near the west corner of the main block. Large exterior equipment including an emergency generator, gas meter, electrical transformer, and cooling tower are stationed on the south lawn of the courthouse. Two electrical utility boxes and adjoining conduit piping are anchored to the courthouse slightly above the ground floor.

East and West

The east and west elevations are on the narrow sides of the courthouse and are similarly detailed. Both are symmetrical, with eight narrow bays of stacked vertical windows, six of which are segmented with dark decorative aluminum spandrels. The nine pilasters are not fluted, and each has a single step setback near the windows. Each bay is topped by a horizontal panel carving of a shield atop a scroll abutted by ears of corn. Both elevations feature an inset dark metal full-view door surrounded by a hulking limestone lintel and pilasters, similar to the main north side entry. The west façade is at ground level, with the east side elevated above ground level due to natural sloping of the courthouse square.⁴ The east entry is accessed by a half-flight of concrete stairs, flanked by concrete wing walls, and a covered handicapped entry at ground level. The two center bays on each side do not have spandrels, and are roughly half the length of the abutting six, due to the heavy limestone lintel. Both elevations feature modern full pane double doors topped with a single glass transom. Each limestone transom features identical carvings of an open book over a crossguard sword between two torches.

Interior Plan & Character Defining Features

The courthouse retains its original floor plan, a single arterial corridor with slight variations on each level. The basement, first and second floors feature rooms of varying sizes, adjacent to the corridor oriented east to west. The ground floor is arranged in a T-shape, with the primary corridor running east to west, and a small hallway aligned north to south, on its west elevation. The main entrance and vestibule on the first floor open onto the main (east-west) corridor from the north, creating a slight T-shape layout. The second level possesses a moderate U-shaped floor plan, with two short hallways branching from the main corridor; the third and fourth floors have different layouts, characterized by minimal or no corridors and large rooms.

Two staircases sited on the east and west ends of the first floor are the only exterior access to the ground, first, and second floors from both elevations. The building houses two courtrooms, the commissioners' court on the first floor, district courtroom on the second and third floors, and numerous county offices on all five floors. The third floor once housed a dormitory for jurors, now used for storage. The county jail originally occupied the top floor, and included a staff apartment, low-security dormitory, individual cells, and offices. In 2008-2009, the space was converted into records storage.

⁴ Wharry Engineering, *Historic Courthouse Master Plan: Van Zandt County Courthouse*. Section III, A. 2000, 5. "[T]here is approximately a six and one-half foot elevation change from west street curb to the east street curb."

The limited palette and subtle carvings on the courthouse's exterior belies a handsomely-finished interior, which retains a high degree of integrity. A majority of the original millwork and finishes are unchanged from the time of construction, including: terrazzo flooring, present on the first floor; painted plaster walls with marble wainscot paneling, and coffered plaster ceilings with a frieze; marble trim around interior doors and windows; and original composite tile flooring on the second floor. Much of the original door casings and adjoining hardware remains intact including office doors with operating transoms and brass hardware; stained wood panel restroom doors with stainless steel hardware; and oak wall mounted picture railing on the ground, first, and second floors. Other features include original composite tile flooring in each courtroom, ceramic tile floors, and marble partitions in the courtroom restrooms. Many historic furnishings are present throughout the courthouse including multiple corridor benches, bookcases, judge's bench, jury box, railing, public seating, courtroom desks, and armchairs. Almost all of the interior lighting has been replaced by flush mounted fluorescent 2 x 4 lights. Only a handful of original Art Deco style fixtures remain in the district courtroom.

The main entrance leads to a small vestibule with wood double doors, flanked by two plaques recognizing a time capsule located on the premises. The vestibule opens onto the foyer, immediately leading to a half-flight staircase accessing the main corridor oriented on an east to west axis. The first floor retains its original terrazzo flooring with a black border, and marble wainscot on the plaster walls. The foyer ceiling features gold painted coffered plaster with a decorative frieze consisting of repeating geometric shapes, typical of Art Deco design. Decorative plaster reliefs are stationed near the ceiling on each corner pilaster near the access between the foyer and main corridor. Photos of significant historical county figures line the south wall of the corridor, with historic-age benches and furnishings adjacent to three doorways and cashier windows concentrated from the center corridor to its east elevation.

The 934 square foot commissioners' courtroom is located at the center of the south elevation and is adjoined by offices of the county judge, county commissioners, treasurer, reception, and administrative coordinator to its southeast. With exception to the addition of fiber tile to the ceiling's center, the courtroom has changed little since its construction. A decorative frieze made up of repeating geometric designs line the coffered plaster ceiling and white painted plaster walls. Many original furnishings remain intact including the judge's bench, jury box, railings, and public bench seating. The County Clerk's office inhabits the entire northeast portion of the first floor and contains a private staircase to the ground level. Down the corridor to the west are the original tax assessor and collector's offices, two large rooms occupying the southwest and northwest quadrant of the floor; both spaces are now used for storage. The original elevator was replaced in 2000 but remains in its original location, a recessed hallway in the southwest quadrant, directly abutting the commissioners' courtroom to its west. Two unadorned steel staircases, located at the east and west ends of the corridor, are comprised of steel framing and tread, with wooden handrails, painted railing, and fluted Newel posts.

The ground floor follows a similar layout as the first floor, with a primary corridor running east to west, bordered by storage, utility rooms, bathrooms, kitchen, law library, and offices of the county treasurer and auditor to the north and south. The two aforementioned staircases provide the only entry to the ground floor from the east and west elevations, a single pedestrian door sited on the south elevation serves as the only exterior access to the ground level. The corridor is simpler than that of the first floor, with white vinyl tile flooring, marble wainscot on white plaster walls, surface mounted light fixtures, marble trim, and oak picture railing around doorways.

The second floor features a much shorter corridor than the two lower floors, as it is dominated by a large district courtroom on its north elevation, with a collection of smaller offices lining the courtroom to the east, south, and west. These offices include the judge, court reporter, court administrators, district clerk, and jury room. The corridor features checkered vinyl flooring and marble wainscoting, coffered plaster ceiling, millwork, and historic

Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

furnishing. The 2,336 square foot double-height courtroom, adjacent jury room, and breakroom occupy the majority of the second and third floors. The courtroom consists of painted plaster walls and paneling carved to simulate fluted pilasters, located at each corner and window. Decorative molding at the ceiling's edge and panel reliefs atop each pilaster resemble geometric patterns found in the first floor lobby, corridor, and commissioners' courtroom. The original plaster coffered ceiling remains but has been modified by fiber tiles glued to the entire center section. The courtroom features tall windows on the north side, with Art Deco style metal air vents beneath. The courtroom possesses a mixture of modern fluorescence and aluminum Art Deco pendant light fixtures suspended from the ceiling. Single pane translucent interior windows line the south elevation of the courtroom and are backlit by the hallway. Ornate aluminum grillwork faces each window, with photos of historical figures between them.

The judge's bench features a large oak-paneled backdrop, flanked by three doors accessing the jury room, breakroom, and second floor corridor. Many original oak furnishings remain in use, including the judge's bench, witness stand, clerk's table, and jury boxes. The majority of the third floor is occupied by the district courtroom, with the remaining space designated as storage. The fourth floor jail retains its original glazed tile walls, painted plaster ceiling, steel doors, and exposed concrete flooring; some cells have an exposed concrete ceiling, and riveted plat cells with the original operation mechanisms in place. The jail was converted to records storage ca. 2009.⁵

Summary of Alterations and Integrity

Modifications to the courthouse are limited, the majority of which are minor repairs and alterations, resulting in cumulative and incremental changes since its 1937 construction.⁶ The courthouse's overall integrity loss is minimal, with some alterations now older than fifty years in age; examples include the addition of a water heating system in 1941 and installation of air conditioning around 1963. The most recent repairs and modifications to the building's interior spaces reflect changing usage and modern business practices; examples include:

- installation of a 12 x 12 acoustical ceiling tile in the district courtroom (1981);
- remolded district clerk's office (1982);
- re-roofed lower west and east courthouse roofs (1983-1984);
- reinforced handicapped entrance (1984);
- new interior electrical system (1987);
- exterior windows tinting (1996);
- new interior elevator (2000);
- conversion of fourth floor in record storage (2008-2009).

Other changes include the addition of dropped acoustical ceilings in several offices. Plumbing repairs resulted in exposed piping, heavy wall cuts, and removal of a section of the plaster ceiling on the third floor. Three freestanding and intrusive utility stations located on the south lawn partially obstruct the view of the south façade. In 1996, the Mid-Continental Restoration Company cleaned the exterior of the courthouse, replaced window glass, installed banisters, repaired ceilings in second floor district courtroom and corridor, and painted door and window trim. Although these repairs helped reverse some degradation of the building's historic integrity, it was not a full restoration repair. In 2000, Wharry Engineering of Garland, Texas produced a Historic Master Plan for the Van Zandt County Courthouse. The purpose of the report was to identify potential compliance issues affiliated with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), assess the existing historic integrity of the building, and create a preservation and management strategy for the courthouse.

⁵ Elvis Allen, "National Register Application: Van Zandt County Courthouse," (Canton, Texas, 2015).

⁶ Wharry Engineering, *Historic Courthouse Master Plan: Van Zandt County Courthouse*. Section III, 2000, 4.

SBR Draft

Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

Compared to other unrestored courthouses in Texas, the level of integrity of the Van Zandt County Courthouse is excellent. The building's exterior and interior retains a high degree of design, materials, feeling, and workmanship. The courthouse's most important architectural features, including its massing and ornamentation, remain unchanged. Like its exterior, the interior of the courthouse also retains a high degree of integrity, reinforcing the building's continuous significance to the community. Furthermore, the Van Zandt County Courthouse retains its integrity of location and association, having served the county and its communities without interruption since its completion in 1937.

Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

Statement of Significance

The Van Zandt County Courthouse has served as the center of county government since 1937. In 1936, a “new more modern” courthouse was constructed using special county funds in conjunction with a grant provided by the federal Public Works Administration.⁷ Architectural firm, Voelcker & Dixon of Wichita Falls, Texas, created a design that blended traditional elements from classical architecture with popular modernistic trends, forms, ornamentation, and finishes, resulting in a handsomely textured and finely-detailed building. The courthouse serves as the center of all upper levels of government in Van Zandt County by providing the administration of law, storage of government records, and until recently, housed the county jail on the fourth floor. Based on its decades of service as the center of Van Zandt County government, the courthouse is nominated under Criterion A in the area of Government at the local level of significance. It is also nominated under Criterion C in the area of Architecture at the local level of significance as an outstanding example of Texas’s early modern courthouses.

Van Zandt County Historic Overview⁸

Van Zandt County, in north-central Texas, is bordered by Hunt, Rains, and Wood counties to the north, Kaufman County to the west, Henderson County to the south, and Smith County to the east. The Sabine River forms part of the northeastern county line, with the Neches River located in the county’s east. Prior to the arrival of Europeans, Van Zandt County supported continuous human habitation for over 10,000 years. By the time Anglo-American settlement began, western diseases had already decimated the various Caddoan Indian tribes native to the region. The county was briefly home to Cherokee Indians, who received land titles from the Mexican Government for their abstention from the short-lived Fredonian Rebellion ca. 1826. In 1836, the Texas government signed a treaty recognizing the land claims, only to break the agreement three years later, expelling the Cherokee during the battle of the Neches, and opening the land to colonization.

The Texas legislature approved creation of the county from part of Henderson County in 1848, naming it for Republic of Texas political leader, Isaac Van Zandt. The first county seat was located in the county’s northeast portion at Jordan’s Saline (renamed Grand Saline). Anglo settlers began arriving prior to 1840, most of which cleared small acreages and grazed livestock in the region’s pine woods. The first post office was established in 1845 by county pioneer, John Jordan, namesake of Jordan’s Saline. Some ninety-two percent of the county’s early settlers migrated from states located in the Old South, the majority of which came by way of Tennessee and Alabama. A small number of European immigrants were among the early settlers, including a Norwegian Colony sited in the southwest portion of the county at Four Mile Prairie. By 1850, the county seat was relocated from the Jordan’s Saline to the centrally-located City of Canton.

Subsistence farming was the base of the county’s early economy, with some participating in salt extraction near present day Grand Saline. Plantation farming did not prosper in Van Zandt County, causing the slave population to drop from over 6,000 to 322 before the Civil War. Although, a majority of the county’s citizenry (181 of 308) voted in favor of secession in 1861, and served in the Confederate army, a number of small farmers and Norwegian settlers ardently opposed the war. This vocal minority is credited as one explanation for the practice of calling the county the “Free State of Van Zandt.”⁹ The county experienced an extended period of civil unrest during the

⁷ Wharry Engineering, *Historic Courthouse Master Plan: Van Zandt County Courthouse*. Section II, 9, 2000.

⁸ Adapted from Gerald F. Kozlowski, “Van Zandt County,” *Handbook of Texas Online*, June 2010. (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hcv02>); Gerald F. Kozlowski, “Free State of Van Zandt,” *Handbook of Texas Online*, June 2010. (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/pdf01>), accessed March 23, 2016.

⁹ For additional explanations see: William Samuel Mills, *History of Van Zandt County* (Canton, Texas, 1950); Wentworth Manning, *Some History of Van Zandt County* (Des Moines, Iowa: Homestead, 1919).

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Reconstruction Era, with vigilante violence against freedmen, unionist, and politically motivated murders becoming conventional practice. Land values declined as a result of the postbellum economic depression, leaving small-scale subsistence farming the primary economic engine in the county. Limited access to outside markets further exacerbate the poor financial state of county farmers; however, the 1873 completion of the Texas and Pacific Railway (T&P) in the north part of the county was an immediate boon to the farmers and the local economy. By 1890, the total number of improved acreage increased almost five-fold, and the county's small population of approximately 6,400 grew to 16,225.

As money and commerce flowed into Van Zandt County, disputes flared between Canton and the emerging shipping center of Wills Point over the location of the county's seat of government. In 1877, an election was held to determine its future locale. After a controversial tallying process, in which some voting boxes were throughout, county officials declared Wills Point the victor and ordered all county records be removed from Canton. The residents of Van Zandt County contested the results; some 500 men under the leadership of county pioneer, Thomas Jefferson Trowel, marched on Wills Point to retrieve the records. Governor Richard B. Hubbard dispatched troops to the location to quell further unrest. The issue was ultimately resolved in the Supreme Court of Texas who ruled in favor of Canton.

The county's strong agrarian economy and populist tendencies fostered a host of alternative political movements in the latter half of the nineteenth century, including the Grange, Farmers' Alliance, Greenback Party, and the Texas-based People's Party, which had a local chapter of 300 members by the early 1890s. Van Zandt County was one of the few in the region that did not disenfranchise black voters through instituting the White Primary, a practice common in other East Texas counties. Texas Governor James Stephen Hogg served as district attorney for Van Zandt County and launched his gubernatorial reelection campaign in 1892 in the county.

By 1900, the county boasted a population of 25,000 and the number of farms increasing to 4,208. Van Zandt County also possessed a plethora of modern amenities, including telephone service, a new brick courthouse, and twenty-five schools. Agriculture remained the driving economic force in the county, but became slightly more diverse, as livestock developed into an even more important commodity than in previous decades. Salt production increased during the early 1900s, with companies such as the Lone Star Salt Company and the Grand Saline Salt Company (later purchased by Morton Salt Company) active until 1920. Commercial cotton production changed the agricultural makeup of Van Zandt County, with more than 83,527 acres of the crop under cultivation by 1910. Although cotton bolstered profits for many farmers between 1910 and 1920, roughly half were forced to work as tenants or sharecroppers. By the 1930s, a coalescing of events, including an economic downturn, detrimental agricultural practices, and insect infestations, drove production and profits down, resulting in many tenant farmers driven from the land. The county weathered the Great Depression thanks to continued natural resource production, with Morton Salt Works taking up residence at Grand Saline, and the discovery of oil near the City of Van in 1929. New Deal programs such as the Public Works Administration and Agricultural Adjustment Administration provided funding for local infrastructure projects and relief for farmers suffering from fallen prices. The county slowly regained its economic footing during the Second World War with oil, salt, and various agricultural goods in demand. Livestock, dairy, and truck farming became the county's economic staples after the war. Between 1940 and 1960, the county population fell from approximately 31,000 to 19,091. The 2014 population was 52,910.

Early Van Zandt County Courthouses¹⁰

The present courthouse is the sixth such building to serve Van Zandt County. The initial courthouse was established in 1848 and was sited at the original county seat of Jordan's Saline (Grand Saline). Very little is known about this

¹⁰ Partially adapted from Wharry Engineering, *Van Zandt County Courthouse: Historic Courthouse Master Plan*, 2000.

first building. When the county seat was moved to Canton in 1850, county commissioners enlisted James Brady to construct a log framed courthouse with board walls measuring 8 ft. in height and 18 ft. wide; spaces between logs were to be “lined with boards, to be covered with 4 ft. boards nailed on.” It was also ordered that the new courthouse possessed a “good puncheon floor,” along with one door and shutter and one window with shutter. The structure was located on the west elevation of the current square. The structure was occupied by the court in December 1851, at which time all county records were moved from Jordan’s Saline.

In 1857, Fredrick Ezell was awarded a contract to erect the third county courthouse and the second to be located in Canton. The structure was comprised of brick, measuring approximately 40 x 40 ft. with a total construction cost of \$6,355.¹¹ Protest erupted over the perceived fiscal extravagance of the new structure and afforded citizens outside Canton the opportunity to retaliate for prior misdeeds committed by county officials.¹² In the August 1858 elections, county citizens declined to pay for the new courthouse and repeated this action at every election for the next twenty years. The building stood until 1871 when it was razed due to serious damage inflicted upon it by departing reconstruction troops.¹³ Ezell did not receive payment until 1880. Following the demolition of the third courthouse, the commissioners’ court ordered the construction a 50 x 50 ft., two-story, framed building in 1872. This new courthouse was to be a permanent construction and located within the downtown square.¹⁴ The contract was awarded to G.W. Tull and completed at a cost of \$8,333.33. The courthouse was comprised of a cross floor plan, with four rooms at twenty square feet each, all with 7 x 9 ft. double doors leading to each room, partitioned by 10 ft. wide cross halls. The district courtroom was located on the second floor and measured 50 x 30 ft., with the remaining space divided into offices. Twelve windows were provided for the courtroom, with two windows in each room on the first floor. Four brick chimneys adjoined four separate fire places located on the first floor, with two sited on the east and two on west sides of the building. Specifications called for pine wood floors with pine or post oak shingles. The structure was thoroughly inspected by a special committee due to problems incurred during early construction, but was approved by county officials in 1873. The courthouse was in use until 1894.

By the late 1880s, much of Canton’s public square was lined with modern brick buildings; the juxtaposition between the contemporary brick building and the frame courthouse helped influence public perceptions that the fourth courthouse was an “eyesore” and no longer fit with modern aesthetics of the square. On August 14, 1894, the Commissioners’ Court composed of C.H. Hart, H.H. Carmack, J.A. West, J.T. Hatton, and headed by County Judge, T.R. Yantis, ordered the construction of a new public courthouse. At the same meeting, the court awarded a contract to architect, W.C. Dodson, to draft plans for the new building. The construction contract was let to San Antonio based Otto P. Kroeger, priced at \$49,000 with \$1,000 designated for Dodson. The framed courthouse was “removed from the square to a temporary location” to make room for the new 101 ft. tall building. Constructed in the Romanesque style, the courthouse was comprised of brick and native stone, with a tower topped by a bronze eagle, now located on the present courthouse lawn. In 1895, the county’s Populist Party filed an injunction to halt construction, based on bonds issued to pay for the project. The objection was eventually resolved, with the courthouse completed in 1896. It stood for forty years before it was demolished in 1935.

¹¹ Partially adapted from Wharry Engineering, *Van Zandt County Courthouse: Historic Courthouse Master Plan*, 2000, 8.; Elvis Allen, “National Register Application: Van Zandt County Courthouse,” (Canton, Texas, 2015), 5.

¹² William Samuel Mills, *History of Van Zandt County* (Canton, Texas, 1950), 16-21.; Wharry Engineering, *Historic Courthouse Master Plan: Van Zandt County Courthouse*. Consultant Reports, Elvis Allen, *Archeology of Van Zandt County*, 2000.: A dispute over placement of the county seat raged several years prior to construction of the Ezell courthouse building, as it was discovered that a surveying error in 1850, placed the town of Canton on private land, some two and a half miles southeast of its intended location. Those living outside of present-day Canton wanted the buildings moved to the initially planned site. No public demonstration was made, though the rejection of 1857 courthouse was understood to be linked to this grievance.

¹³ Elvis Allen, “National Register Application: Van Zandt County Courthouse,” (Canton, Texas, 2015), 7.

¹⁴ Elvis Allen, “National Register Application: Van Zandt County Courthouse,” (Canton, Texas, 2015), 6.

1937 Van Zandt Courthouse¹⁵

By the mid-1930s, many believed the forty year old Romanesque courthouse building was insufficient for the increasing volume of business in the county. In 1935, the Commissioners' Court comprised of County Judge, E.C. Stovall, and Commissioners, Frank Green, Homer Tunnell, E.E. Smith, and Fred Smith, passed an order for construction of Van Zandt County's sixth courthouse. A contract for design plans was let to M.T. Clements of Voelcker and Dixon, a Wichita Falls, Texas based architectural firm responsible for eleven courthouses, all built during the same period.¹⁶ On January 24, 1936, L.W. Wentzel was contracted to construct the new courthouse at a cost of \$125,300. In 1886, Van Zandt County citizens established a special fund, known as the "courthouse fund," that earmarked taxes for construction of their next courthouse.¹⁷ Hardships associate with the funding of previous courthouse projects was likely the impetus for such foresight. The fund began in earnest, with little growth taking place for its first decades in existence. However, the discovery of oil in 1929 sent tax revenues soaring and increased the value of the fund. Once construction of a new courthouse was authorized, officials approved release of the \$125,000 fund. In addition to the sizable county funds, a Public Works Administration (PWA) grant for \$86,000 was rewarded to meet all construction and furnishing costs. The PWA was one of several New Deal public works programs designed to relieve massive unemployment caused by the Great Depression. Unlike the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and Works Progress Administration (WPA) which focused on unskilled laborers, the PWA helped to employ professionals and craftsmen in the planning and construction of various public works projects, such as roads, public buildings, dams, bridges, hospitals, and schools. The PWA also made loans and grants to states and municipalities.

Work on the new courthouse began in April 1936, four months later than scheduled. Laborers worked double shifts to pour concrete for the courthouse floors in an attempt to offset delays. The building was to be constructed of "gray stone" with marble trim. Infrastructure systems, including plumbing, were contracted to L.O. Layton of Tyler at a cost of \$14,725; electrical wiring was handled by Petroleum Electric of Kilgore, Texas; and lighting was furnished and installed by Jack Hurst Electric Company. The Otis Elevator Company of Dallas finished and installed a modern electric elevator totaling \$5,783. Furnishings were provided by the Watson Manufacturing Company of Jamestown, New York, costing \$6,243.38; all wood and metal furniture was installed for \$14,300. The Southern Prison Company of San Antonio equipped the fourth floor jail at a cost of \$12,450. Van Zandt County resident, Thomas E. Murrey, was awarded the contract for landscaping the courthouse lawn totaling \$1,732.15; a sprinkler system was installed by Joe H. Fry at \$1,019.20. Exterior infrastructure, including lighting, curbs, sidewalks, gutters, and drainage systems were installed by L.W. Wentzell totaling \$3,005. All other costs did not exceed the allotted budget for construction of the new building, resulting in a "debt-free" building upon its dedication. The courthouse was officially dedicated in a public ceremony on June 10, 1937 by W.B. Wayne, Sr. Current and former county residents took part in the event alongside visitors from nearby counties, and a host of public officials. The neighboring cities of Grand Saline, Edgewood, and Van entered floats in the official parade and provided bands for a post-dedication concert.¹⁸

¹⁵ Partially adapted from Wharry Engineering, *Van Zandt County Courthouse: Historic Courthouse Master Plan*, 2000.

¹⁶ 254 Texas Courthouses, Voelcker & Dixon, Architects." accessed March 25, 2016.

<http://www.254texascourthouses.net/voelcker--dixon-architects.html>.

¹⁷ Tyler Journal, "Van Zandt County Court House to be Officially Dedicated Thurs, June 10," *Tyler Journal*, Vol. 13, No. 7, Ed. 1. *Tyler Journal*. June 11, 1937. Accessed April 5, 2016, <http://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph619945>.

¹⁸ Tyler Journal, "Van Zandt County Court House to be Officially Dedicated Thurs, June 10," *Tyler Journal*, Vol. 13, No. 7, Ed. 1. *Tyler Journal*. June 11, 1937. Accessed April 5, 2016, <http://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph619945>.

Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

The Van Zandt County Courthouse has served as the center of government for the county continuously since 1937. It stands as an excellent example of the federal, state, and local government funding partnerships that resulted in the construction of major public buildings through the Great Depression, as well as supplying employment opportunities for skilled craftsmen and unskilled laborers through a period of economic strife. As such, it is nominated to the National Register under Criterion A in the area of Government, at the local level of significance.

Architectural Significance of the Van Zandt County Courthouse¹⁹

The Van Zandt County Courthouse meets National Register Criteria C in the area of Architecture as an outstanding example of Depression-era Classical Modern design and as the work of the Wichita Falls firm Voelcker & Dixon. The courthouse is a significant example of the Modern Classical style frequently utilized throughout Texas for civic buildings during the 1930s and 1940s. Buildings of this style are often categorized as “Art Deco” or “Art Moderne,” terms derived from Paris’s 1925 *Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes*, which is commonly (but imprecisely) used to describe a diverse assortment of “modernistic” art and architectural styles of the 1920s and 1930s. The Van Zandt County Courthouse’s appearance is more accurately described as a combination of traditional design concepts with elements of the modern vocabulary associated with Art Deco and Moderne architecture. Richard Guy Wilson traces the origins of the Modern Classical style in the United States to Bertram Goodhue’s National Academy of Sciences Building (1919-24) and Paul Cret’s Folger Shakespeare Library (1928-1932), both in Washington, D.C. These buildings served as prototypes for governmental buildings designed and constructed through various New Deal programs. Each building demonstrates a response to modernist ideals by retaining traditional monumental qualities, but abstracting historical styles and forms, and using simplified ornament in new design schemes.

Both are classical in form and symmetry, but do not adhere to classical orders and exhibit little to no ornamentation in comparison to Beaux Arts design.²⁰ Modernistic appearance was commonly achieved by utilizing a geometric, stylized form of ornamentation in place of a more literal expression of historicist design. This approach was applied to formal design components, such as columns and cornices, as well as in limited areas of applied decoration, often in the form of low-relief sculptural carvings and flattened moldings. Buildings designed in this style achieved a novel and modern appearance, even when the interior plans and functions remained relatively unchanged from previous courthouse types. The style is representative of the progressivism that defined the era, in which erecting a courthouse with a modernistic design became a public assertion of the county’s commitment to growth and improvement. Counties that built courthouses in the late 1920s and throughout the 1930s were replacing buildings that had been constructed in the Victorian era, and the Modern Classical style was the perfect solution for a county who wanted to seem progressive and forward-thinking without completely abandoning the familiarity, solidity and monumentalism of classical idioms. These attributes made the style an especially popular choice for public architecture in the 1930s.

¹⁹ Partially adapted from U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *National Register of Historic Place Registration Form: Jack County Courthouse*, Gregory Smith, National Register Coordinator, 2012.

<http://www.thc.state.tx.us/public/upload/publications/Recent%20Listing%20-%20Jack%20County%20Courthouse%20NR.pdf>.

²⁰ Wilson, Richard Guy. “Modernized Classicism and Washington, D.C.,” in *American Public Architecture: European Roots and Native Expressions*, Papers in Art History from the Pennsylvania State University, ed. Craig Zabel and Susan Scott Munshower (University Park: Pennsylvania State University, 1989), 273-274; 279. Architectural historian Willard B. Robinson uses the term “Stripped Classic” in *The People’s Architecture: Texas Courthouses, Jails, and Municipal Buildings* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1983), while Jay Henry uses the term “Modern Classicism,” and also acknowledges the terms “Starved Classic” and “Cret Classic,” in *Architecture in Texas, 1895-1945* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993). Terms such as “PWA Deco” and “PWA Moderne,” refer to New Deal building programs, and are often used to describe a variety of modernistic styles found in public buildings of the 1930s.

In philosophy as well as form, Paul Cret's Folger Shakespeare Library serves as a clear precedent for the Modern Classicism of the Van Zandt County Courthouse. The library is a definitive and influential expression of the style, wherein the building mass is a closed box with vertically banded windows separated by fluted piers, a basement and an attic.²¹ The library combines the simplicity of modernism through the abandonment of capitals, traditional moldings, and strict adherence to classical orders, but retains the qualities of classicism with emphasis on form, balance, and symmetry. Both buildings feature an abstracted temple form placed on a podium set back from the street, as well as rectangular block massing, flat roofs, corner pavilions, deep voids for openings with stacked windows between pilasters, and low relief ornament. The classical orders are reduced to fluted piers, and floor levels are indicated by spandrel panels. Certain details of the courthouse bear a striking resemblance to those in the library, such as the chamfered awnings over the entrances of both buildings. One notable difference is that the library does not have a central entrance, but two separate entrances, each located in a corner pavilion. This composition was determined by the dual functions of the building as a library and a theater requiring separate entries. The Van Zandt County Courthouse also shows the influence of Art Deco design in its fine details, with geometric and stylized patterns repeating in friezes and moldings inside and out.

The Van Zandt County Courthouse is architecturally significant also for its attention to detail and richness of design that is not apparent from a distance, but only upon closer inspection. While the building's pale limestone color, block massing, and the shallow relief sculpture emphasize its traditional Greek temple-derived composition, the courthouse features decorative elements and a mix of rich materials on its exterior and interior. The courthouse's exterior sculptures are most appropriate for a governmental building of the period, with elements symbolizing the rule of law (books), the power of government (eagles and fasces), and the promotion of uniformly applied justice (scales).

Architects Voelcker & Dixon²²

Architect, Herbert Voelcker, was born in New Braunfels, Texas in 1888. He attended Texas A&M College, earning an Architectural Engineering degree in 1909. He worked in offices in Waco, Fort Worth, and Austin, before taking positions in the Kansas City and Chicago offices of Lewis and Kitchen. After working in Louis Kahn's Detroit office for six months, he arrived in Wichita Falls in 1916, first working with E.S. Fields, and then establishing a partnership with J.L. Dixon in 1918.²³ Biographical information regarding Jesse Dixon is limited, and the firm's archives have been scattered and lost. Voelcker & Dixon was the premier architectural firm in Wichita Falls during the city's "golden age" after the discovery of the nearby Burkburnett Oil Field in 1918. The firm is credited with several major commercial buildings in downtown Wichita Falls, as well as public buildings, including the Wichita Fall Hospital (1926), Wichita Falls City Hall and Municipal Auditorium (1928, with Lang & Witchell), the U.S. Court House and Post Office (1935), Hardin Junior College (later Midwestern University) Administration Building (1936), and the Psychopathic Ward of the Wichita Falls State Psychopathic Hospital (1938). The variety of these large-scale buildings in style, form, and function displays the firm's versatility, employing elements of various period styles with contemporary construction techniques (particularly steel and concrete forms with stone and brick

²¹ In addition to the influence of his works outside of Texas, Cret produced several significant Texas projects, including the 1933 master plan for the University of Texas. The Texas Memorial Museum (with John Staub, 1937) follows Cret's penchant for Classic Modernism, with its blocky mass, stark design, and incised pilasters. Cret's U.S. Courthouse in Fort Worth (with Wiley Clarkson, 1933), also features a symmetrical plan and boxy massing inspired by the classical canon.

²² Partially adapted from U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *National Register Nomination: Jack County Courthouse*, Gregory Smith, National Register Coordinator, 2012.

(<http://www.thc.state.tx.us/public/upload/publications/Recent%20Listing%20-%20Jack%20County%20Courthouse%20NR.pdf>)

²³ *The Encyclopedia of Texas*. Dallas, Tex: Texas Development Bureau, 1921, 561.

veneer). The refined, eclectic but traditional architectural vocabulary of their 1920s buildings gave way to the modernistic mode by the end of the decade, when they began to produce designs for numerous north Texas county courthouses built with federal funding during the Great Depression. Voelcker & Dixon designed ten county courthouses in north Texas between 1928 and 1940 (Herbert Voelcker also designed the 1955 Waller County Courthouse). Most followed the modern idiom, blending a mix of traditional and contemporary forms in the Modern Classical style. The 1928 Wilbarger County Courthouse is the most conservative of these, tied to Beaux Arts tradition with a gray limestone façade featuring a piano nobile with a prominent two-story attached Ionic colonnade supporting a molded entablature and corner pavilions with pediment windows. The Callahan County Courthouse of 1929 is a much more simplified version of this form, composed of buff brick with low-profile brick pilasters and limited cast stone ornament. The firm's modernistic Cottle County Courthouse of 1930 is a departure from their previous work, with dramatic stepped massing and the incorporation of large-scale and highly stylized figurative sculpture into the building façade, demonstrating an understanding and appreciation of contemporary design elsewhere in the United States, in particular the 1924 design of the Nebraska State Capitol by Bertram Goodhue. Voelcker and Dixon's seven other Texas courthouses designed through 1940, including the Van Zandt County Courthouse, are good examples of Modern Classicism, with varying degrees of low relief sculpture. The designs for these courthouses are much simpler than their earlier examples, with a tendency towards a single massive block with simple projecting wings or a single block broken by vertical windows.

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SBR Draft

Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas



Source: Google Earth, accessed April 13, 2016.

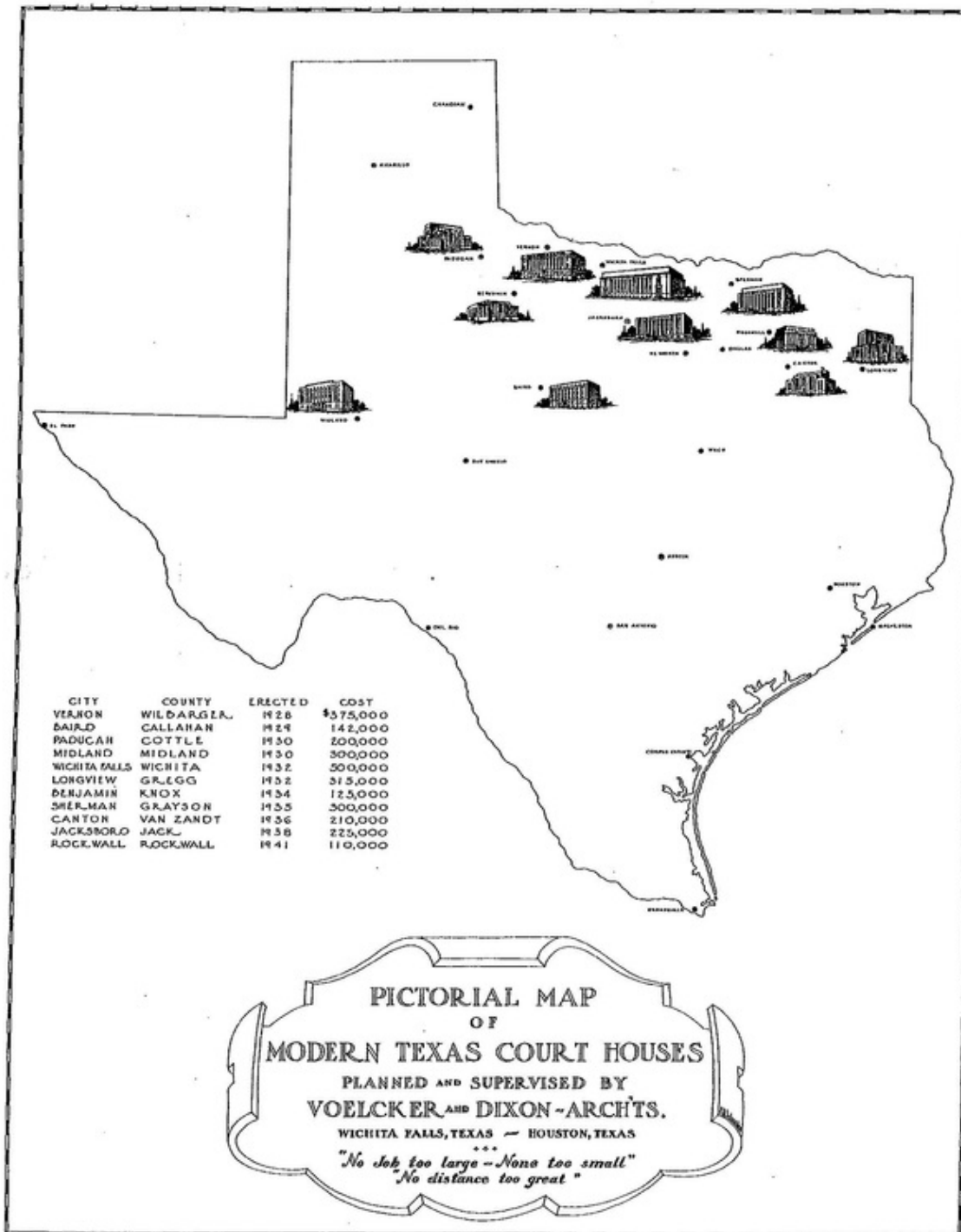


SBR Draft

Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

Figure 1: Map of the Voelcker & Dixon "Modern Texas Courthouses," ca. 1941.

Photo via: <http://www.254texascourthouses.net/voelcker--dixon-architects.html>



Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

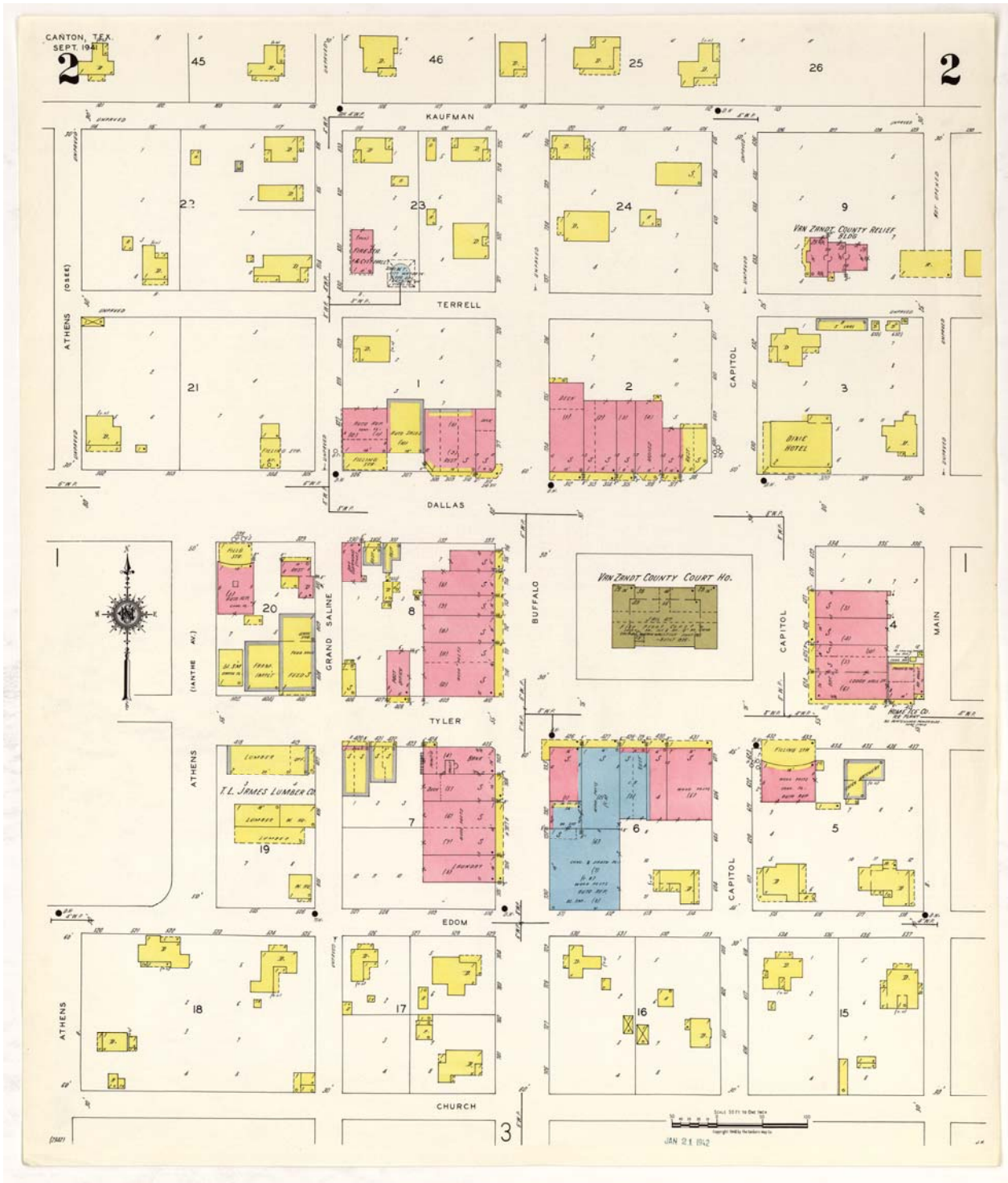
Figure 2: Van Zandt County Courthouse, ca. 1940
Photo courtesy Texas Department of Transportation



Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

Figure 3: Sanborn Map, Canton, Texas 1941.

Source: University of Texas at Austin. <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/sanborn/txu-sanborn-canton-1941-2.jpg>



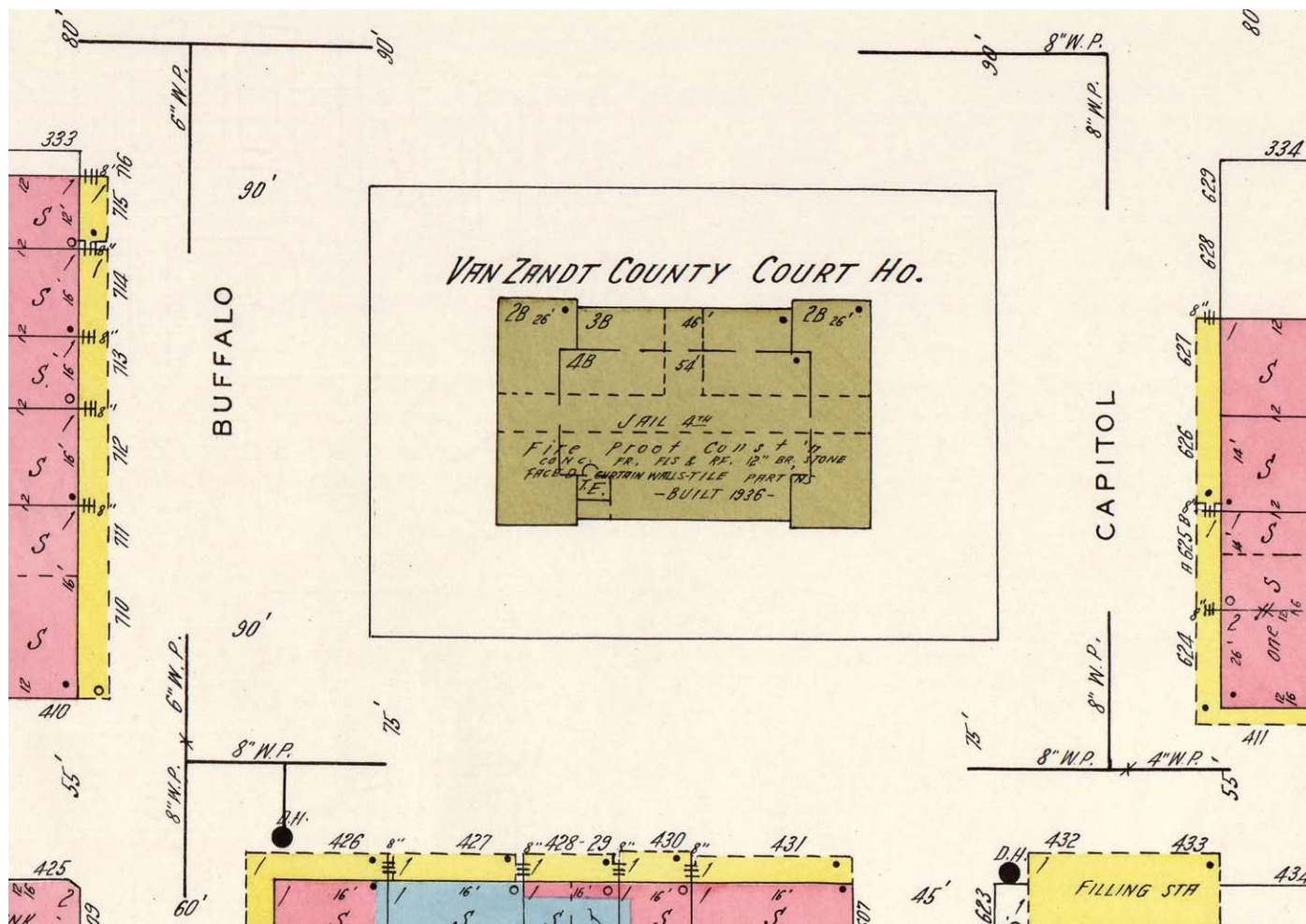
Original located at the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin

SBR Draft

Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

Figure 4: Sanborn Map (detail), Canton, Texas 1941.

Source: University of Texas at Austin. <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/sanborn/txu-sanborn-canton-1941-2.jpg>



Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

Figure 5: Tyler Journal. "Statue Honors Early Texas Statesman and Wife: Clay Model of Isaac Van Zandt Completed for County." 1938.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 14, 1938.

THE TYLER JOURNAL

Statue Honors Early Texas Statesman and Wife

CLAY MODEL OF ISAAC VAN ZANDT COUPLE COMPLETED FOR COUNTY

LIFE-SIZE FIGURES WILL BE CARVED IN STONE

A full-size bas-relief of Isaac Van Zandt and his wife, Frances Cooke Liscomb Van Zandt, pioneer Texans for whom Van Zandt county was named, is one of a number of Texas Centennial memorial projects, and will be placed on the courthouse square at Canton when completed. The accompanying illustration shows the clay model that has been completed by Waldine Amanda Tauch, San Antonio sculptor. Miss Tauch, who is connected with the Copson studios there, is standing beside the model.

Of the historical significance of the Van Zandts, the Fort Worth Star Telegram through whose courtesy we carry the picture, says:

"A native of North Carolina, Isaac Van Zandt brought his wife and a 3-year-old son to Texas in 1839, making the trip in a wagon. They settled in Harrison county. The son was the late Klieber Miller Van Zandt, who later was to have a large part in the rise of Fort Worth from a village of 200 frontier families.

"Young Isaac Van Zandt soon stepped into prominence as a citizen of the Texas Republic. An able lawyer and talented orator, he was chosen minister of the Republic of Texas to the United States and represented Texas at Washington, D. C., in negotiations for annexation to the Union.

"A member of the Texas Constitutional Convention in 1845, Van Zandt drew the bill that placed into the State constitution the homestead law, the first of its kind adopted anywhere exempting a man's home from lawsuits, foreclosures and mortgages.

Died at Age of 34

"Isaac Van Zandt died in Houston at the age of 34, a victim of yellow fever. At that time he was in the midst of a campaign for the governorship of Texas, a post for which he was a popular favorite.

"Mrs. Van Zandt later moved to Fort Worth. She died here in 1909.

"Their children were Mrs. Louisa B. Clough, Maj. K. M. Van Zandt, Dr. I. L. Van Zandt, Mrs. E. J. Beall and Mrs. Ida V. Jarvis, all of whom were prominent citizens until their death.

"Descendants of Isaac Van Zandt still live here and in other parts of Texas."

SOIL CONSERVATION NOTE
FROM JACKSONVILLE

By ALLEN P. C. Technician in Charge

Every farmer who needs maintenance of great deal of emphasis on this one phase of trial program at this that every farmer makes up in good soil planting time.

As a rule most

ISSAC VANZANDT AND FRANCES CLIPSEBOM VANZANDT

1813-1847 1816-1909

MEMBER OF THE CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC 1841-1842 CHRISTIAN PIONEER, WIFE AND MOTHER

CHARGE D'AFFAIRES TO THE UNITED STATES 1842-1844 "HER LIFE WAS PURE BRAVE AND ACTIVE AND HER MEMORY IS FRAGRANT WITH THE GENTLENESS OF GOOD AND NOBLE DEEDS"

1856 1936

This full-size clay model of a bas-relief of Isaac Van Zandt and his wife, Frances Cooke Liscomb Van Zandt, pioneer Texans and forebears of a prominent Fort Worth family, has been completed by Waldine Tauch, San Antonio sculptor, shown beside the model. The bas-relief, when completed in stone, will be placed on the courthouse square at Canton, county seat of Van Zandt. It is a Texas Centennial memorial project.

WASHINGTON NEWS LETTER

FROM OUR CONGRESSMAN
MORGAN G. SANDERS

navy than was originally intended. World events are becoming more and more alarming and it seems necessary that the U. S. hold her own and that can only be done by building up our navy which is fast growing obsolete. Such a program would also encourage business as it would aid the industries that seem hardest hit at present.

Loan Corporation passed by Congress.

Feb. 25 — Reciprocal trade treaties act extended three years by Congress.

Feb. 26 — Senate passed bill for voluntary retirement of Supreme Court justices at seventy.

Mar. 3 — Neutrality extension resolution adopted by Senate.

sent to White House.

June 14 — Senate committee condemned court enlargement bill.

June 21 — Senate refused to cut relief appropriation.

House passed pension bill for railroad employees.

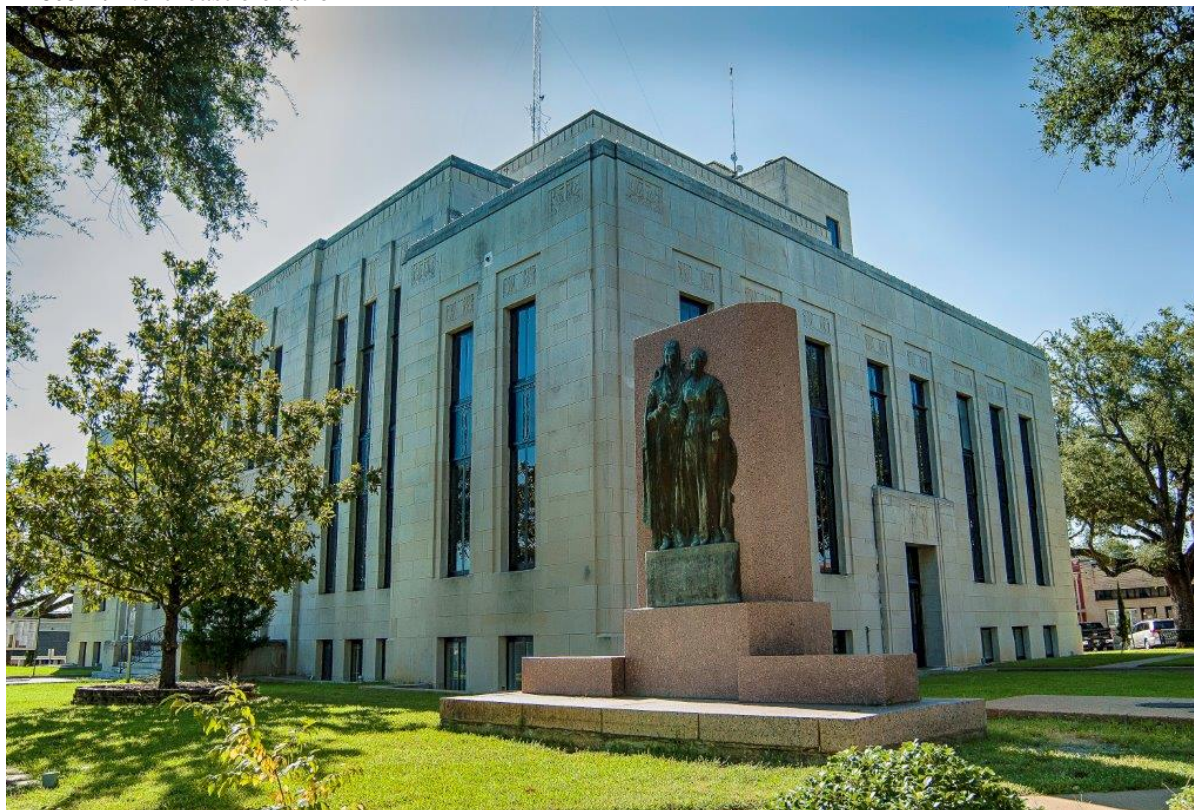
June 22 — Senate passed two billion sixty-three million dollars relief

Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

Photo 1: North elevation



Photo 2: Northeast elevation



Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

Photo 3: Southeast elevation



Photo 4: Southwest elevation



Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

Photo 5: West elevation

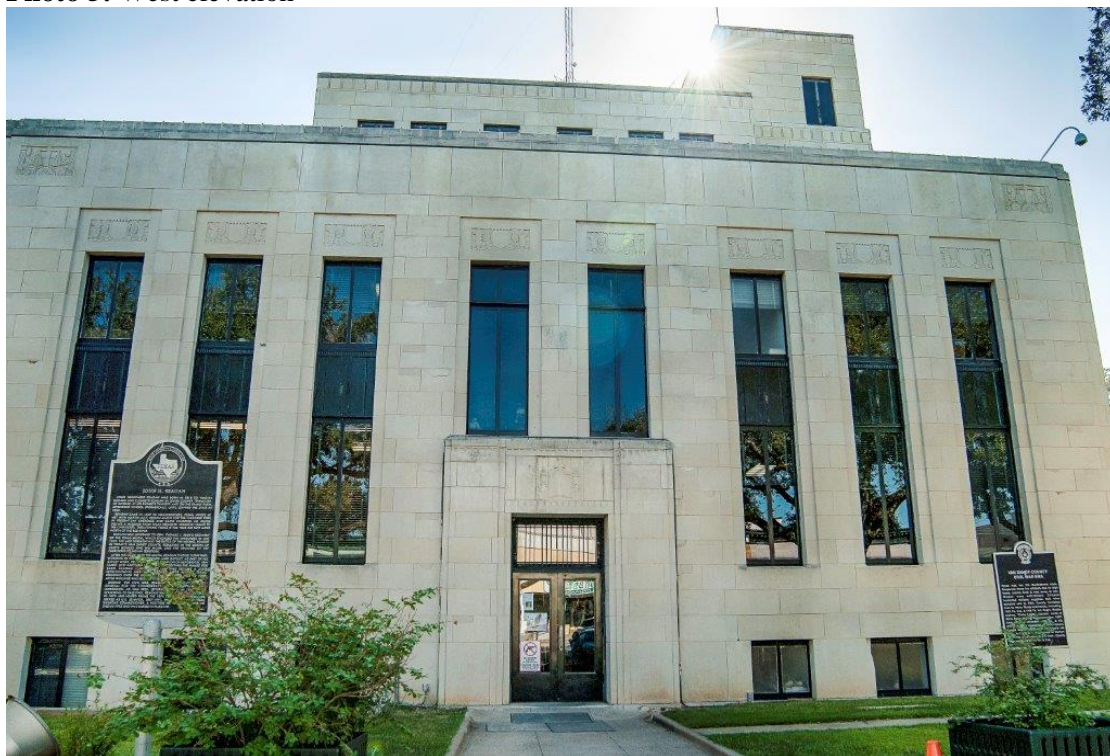


Photo 6: Northeast elevation

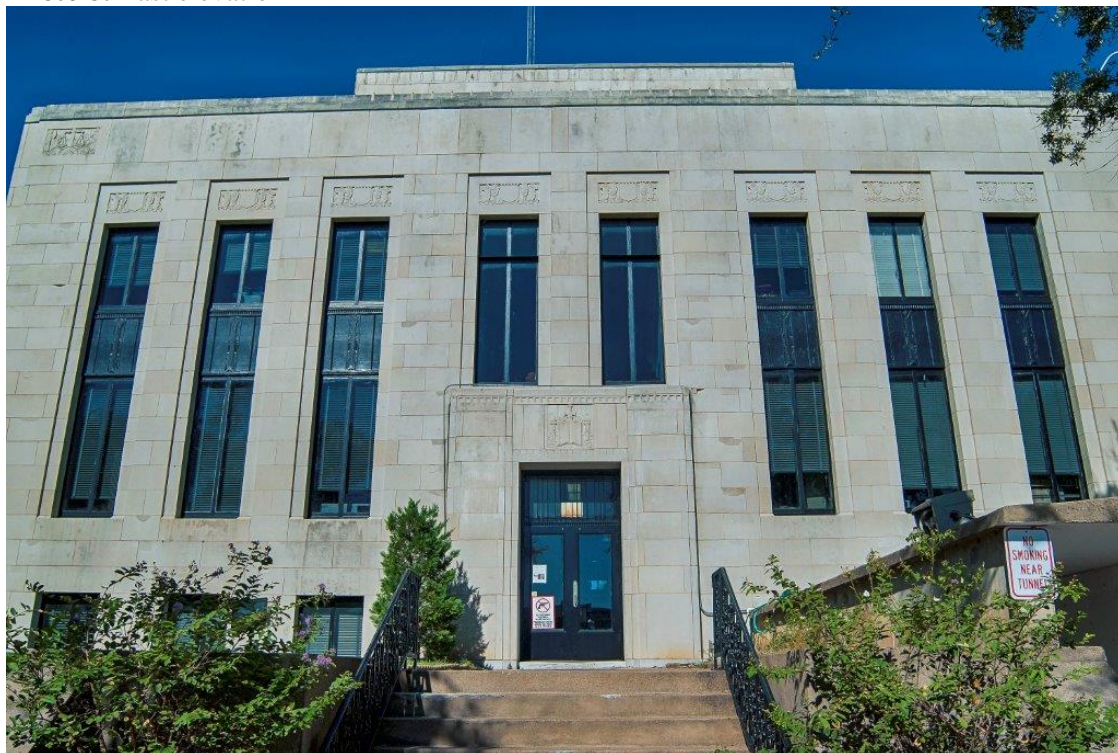


Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

Photo 7: South elevation



Photo 8: East elevation



Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

Photo 9: East elevation



Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

Photo 10: North elevation

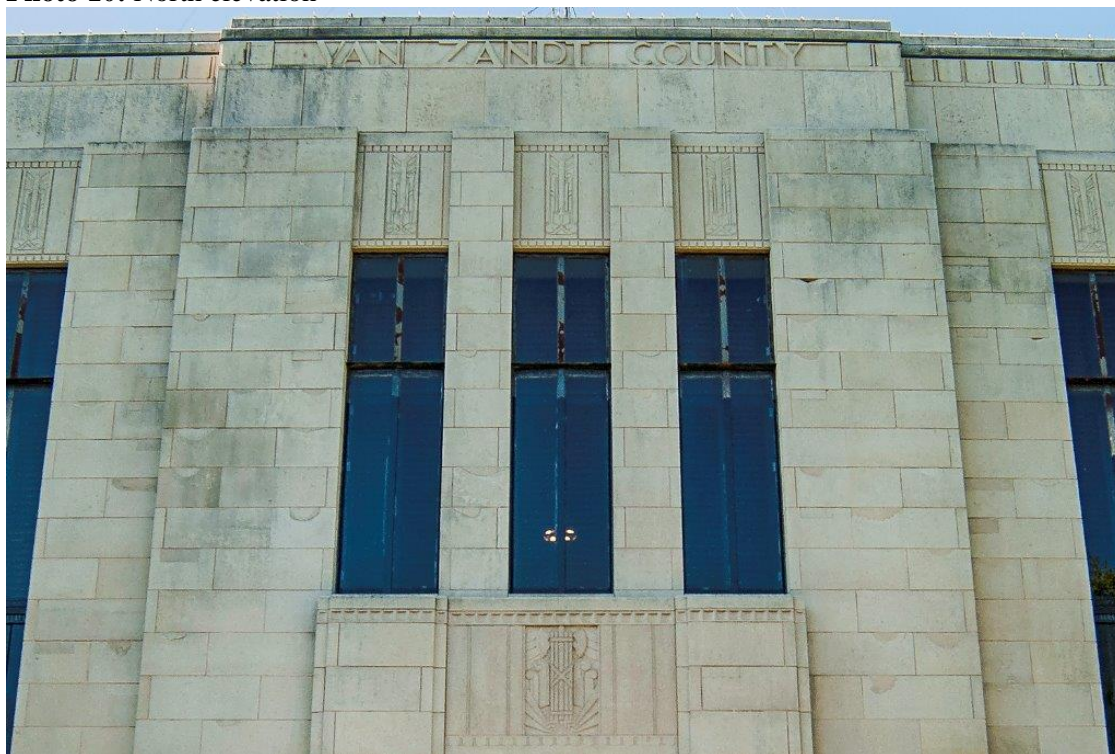
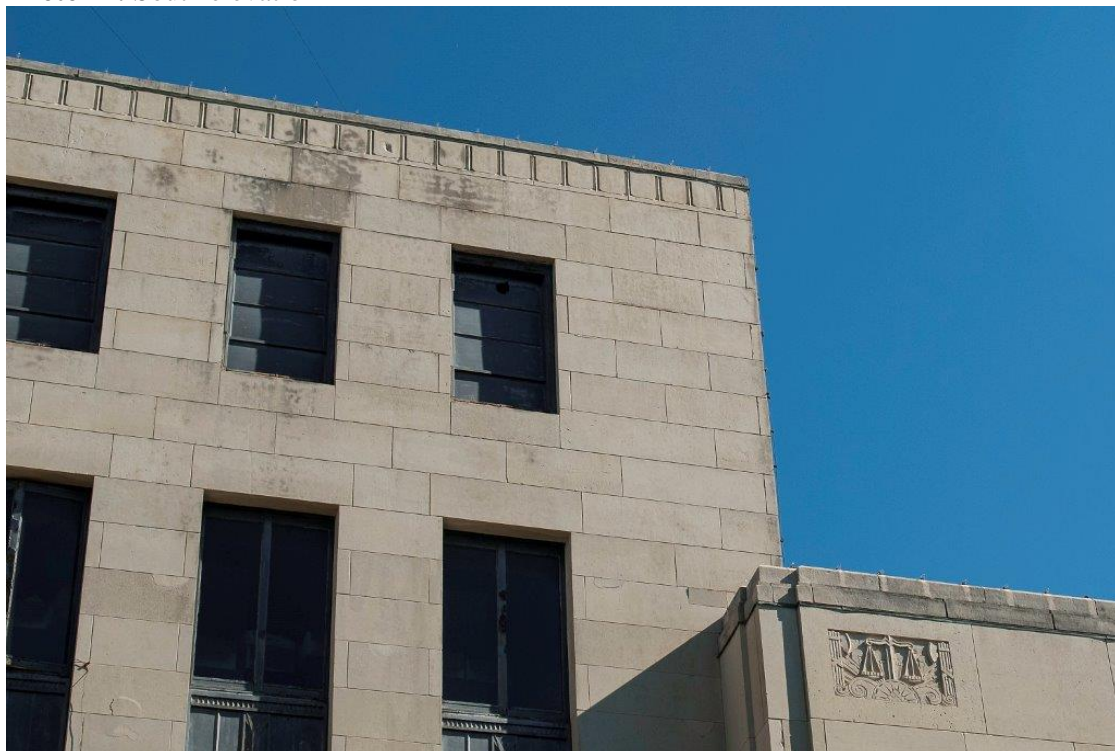


Photo 11: South elevation



Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

Photo 12: North elevation, exterior ground floor



Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

Photo 13: West elevation



Photo 14: North elevation, cornerstone



Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

Photo 15: North elevation



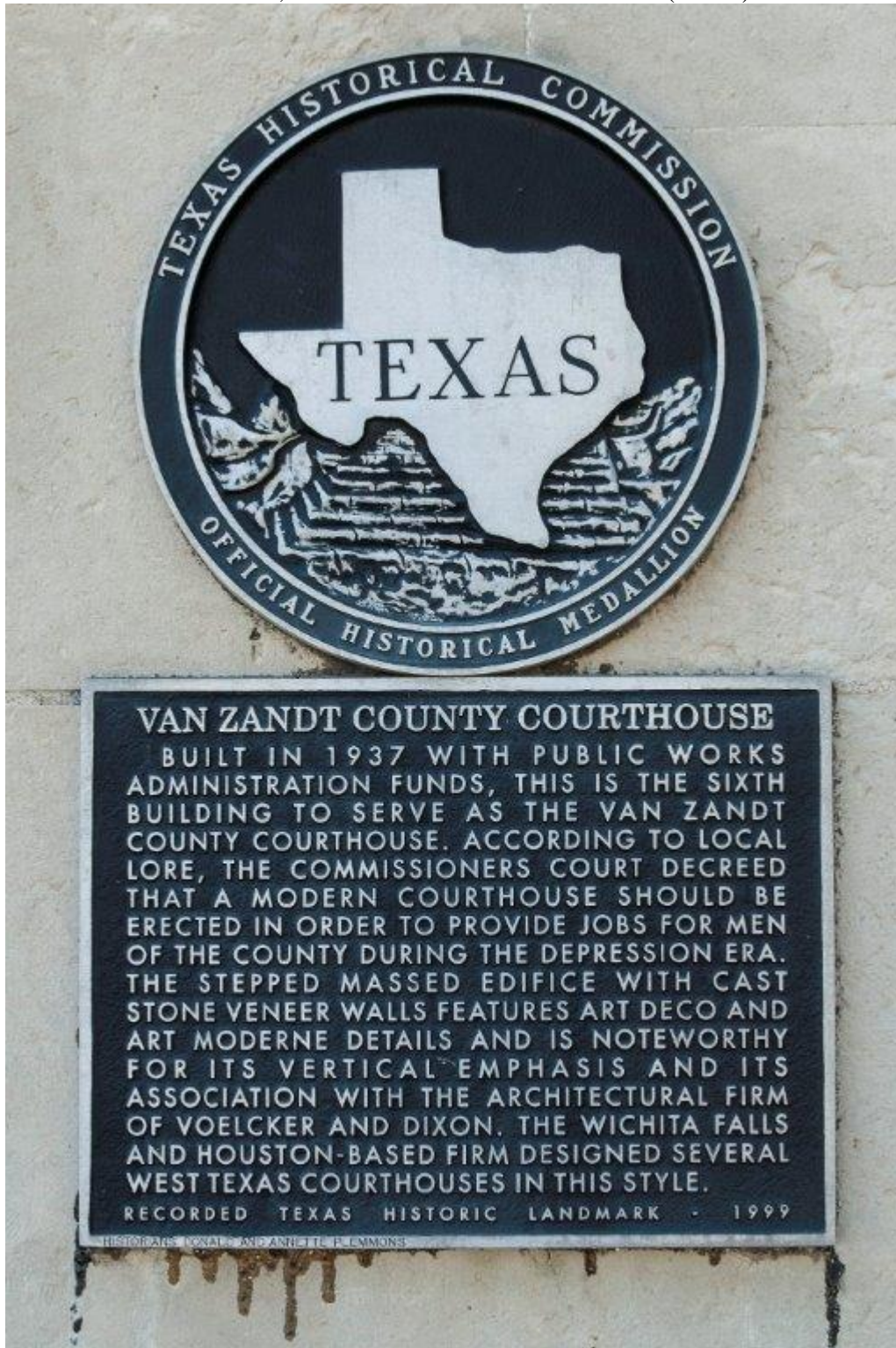
Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

Photo 16: Southeast elevation, monument



Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

Photo 17: North elevation, Recorded Texas Historic Landmark (RTHL)



Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

Photo 18: Main entrance, first floor, view north

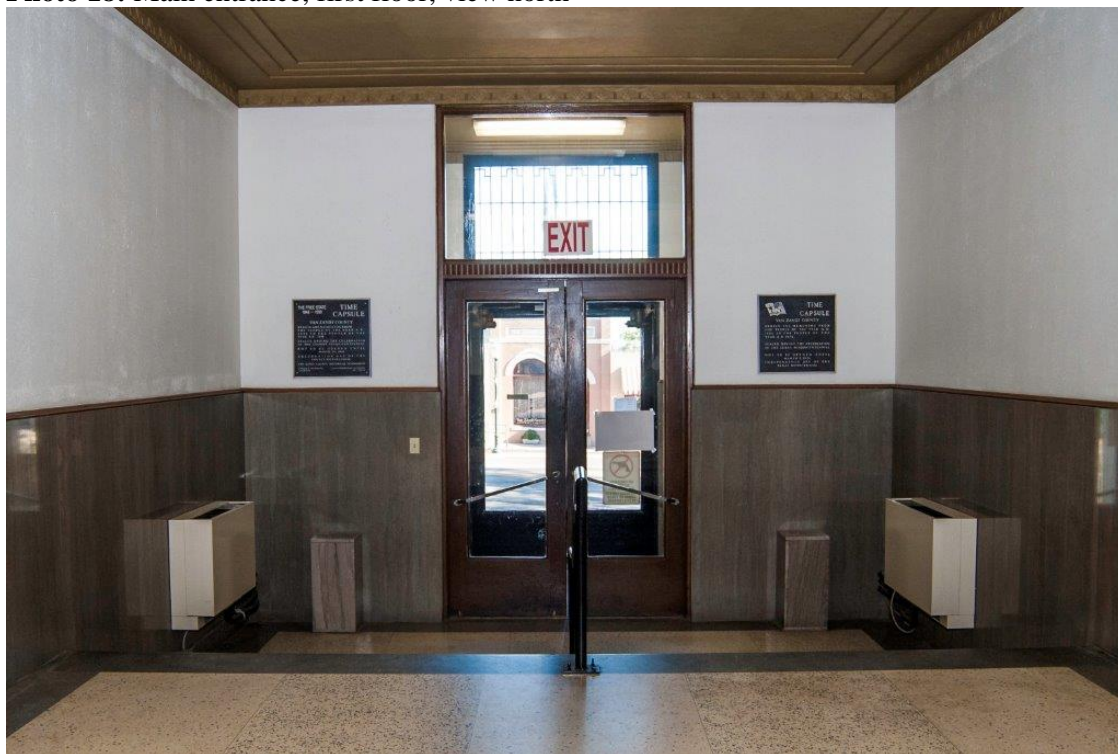
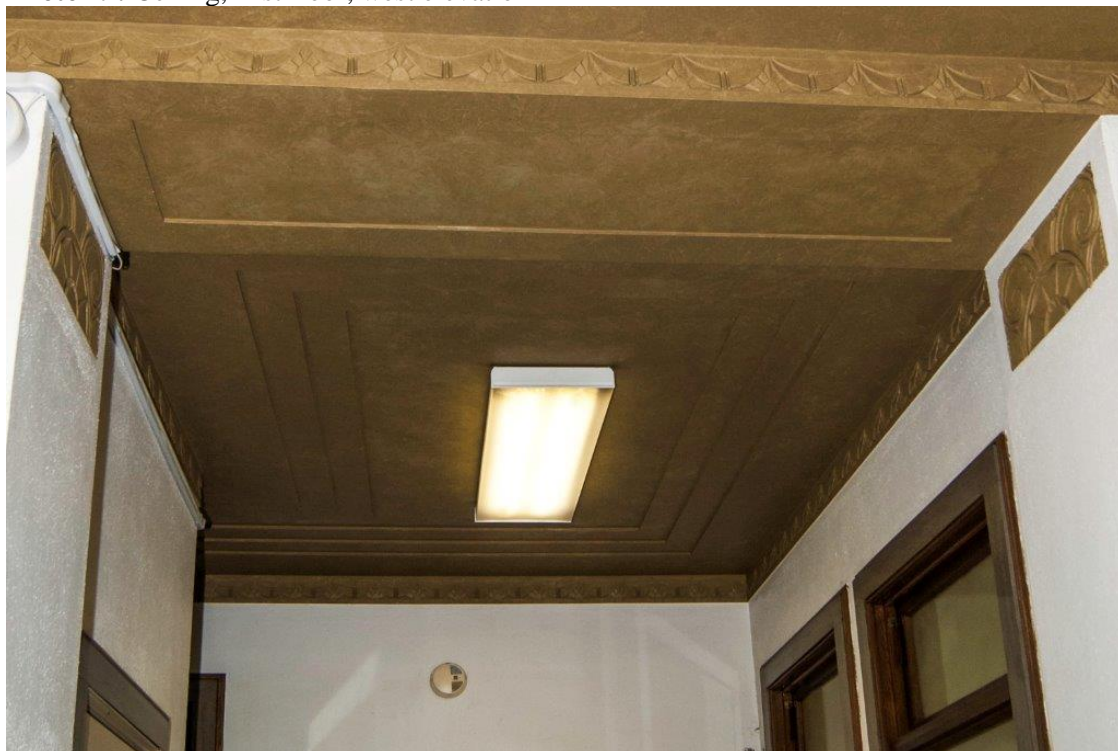


Photo 19: Ceiling, first floor, west elevation



Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

Photo 20: Hallway and staircase, first floor, facing east

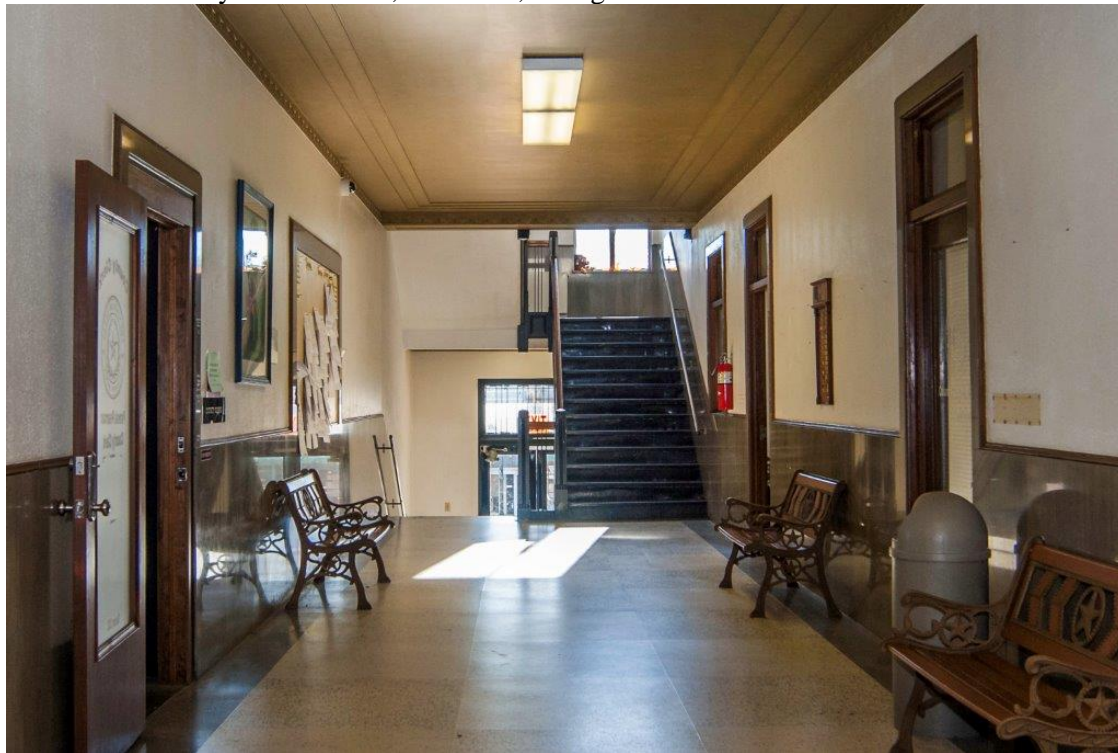


Photo 21: Terrazzo flooring, first floor



Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

Photo 22: Ceiling coffering, first floor

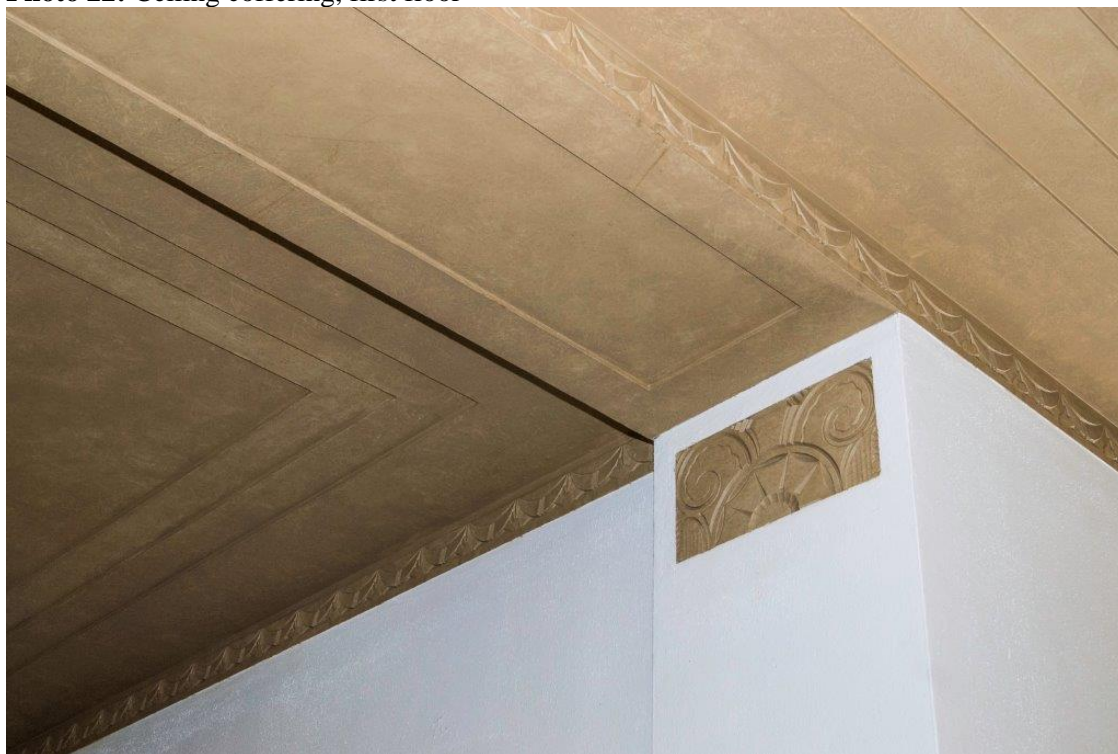


Photo 23: County courtroom, first floor, view west



Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

Photo 24: Staircase, first and second floors, east elevation



Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

Photo 25: Hallway, second floor, view east

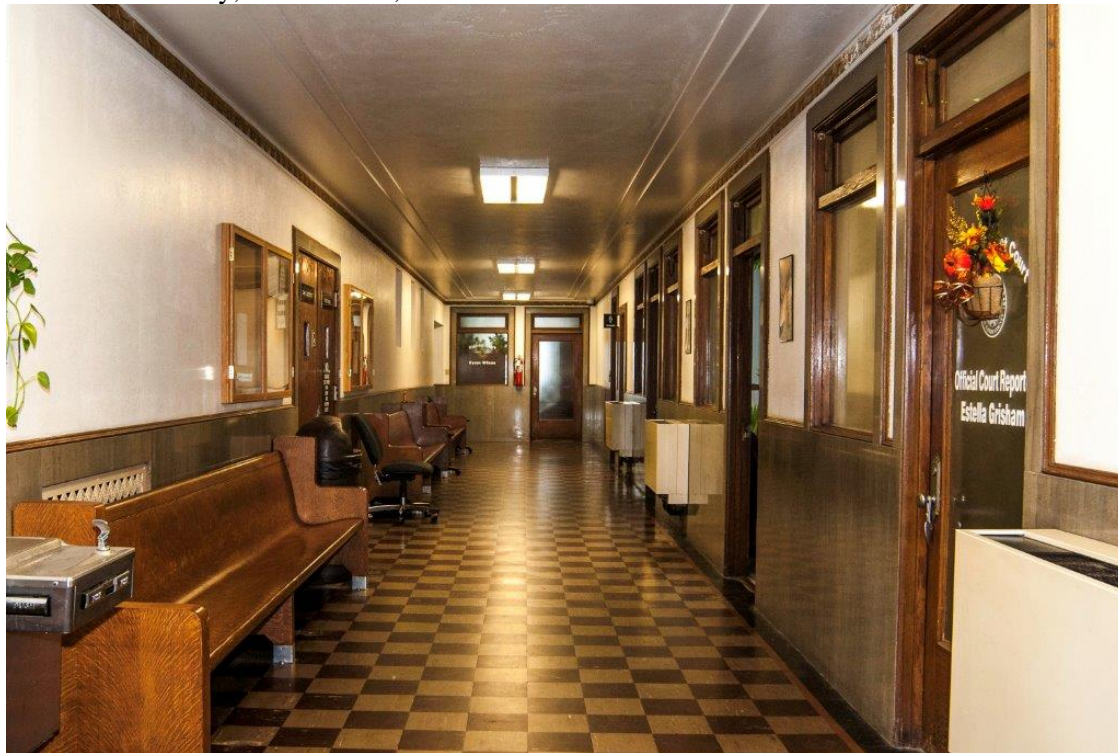


Photo 26: Interior windows, second floor, hallway to district courtroom



Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

Photo 27: District courtroom, second floor, east elevation



Photo 28: Interior windows in district courtroom, second floor, view south

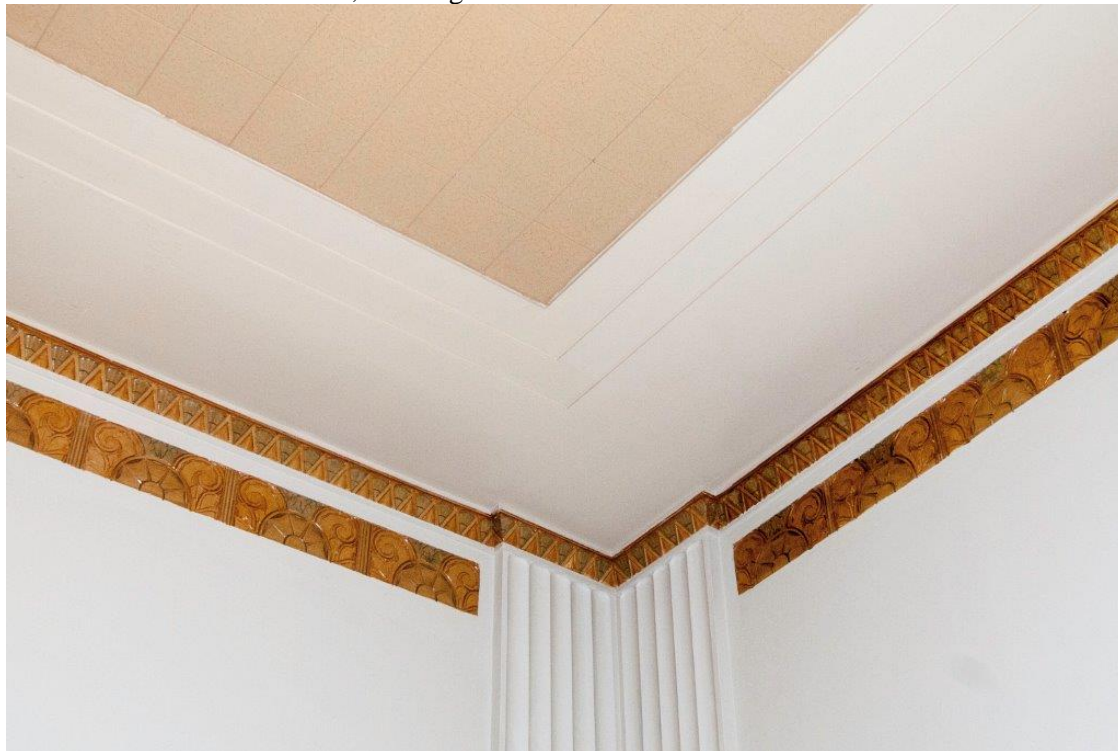


Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

Photo 29: District courtroom -jury box, second floor, view northeast



Photo 30: District courtroom, molding



Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

Photo 31: District courtroom, public benches, view north

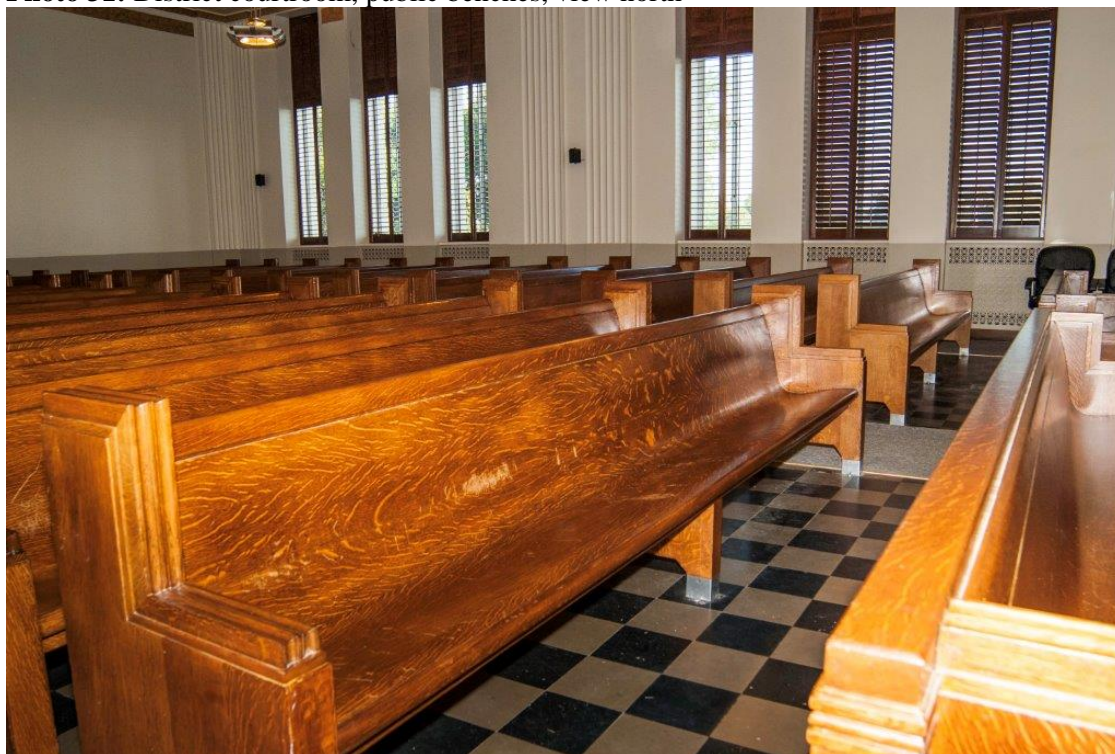


Photo 32: Storage and mechanical equipment, third floor

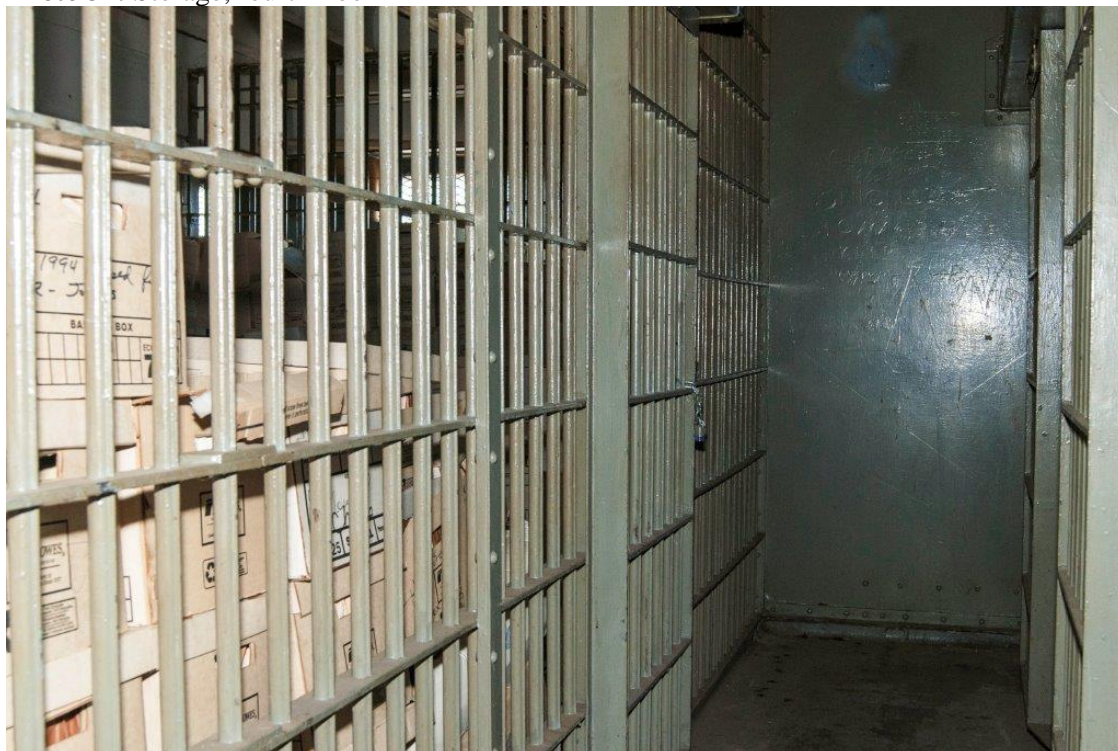


Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

Photo 33: Storage, fourth floor



Photo 34: Storage, fourth floor



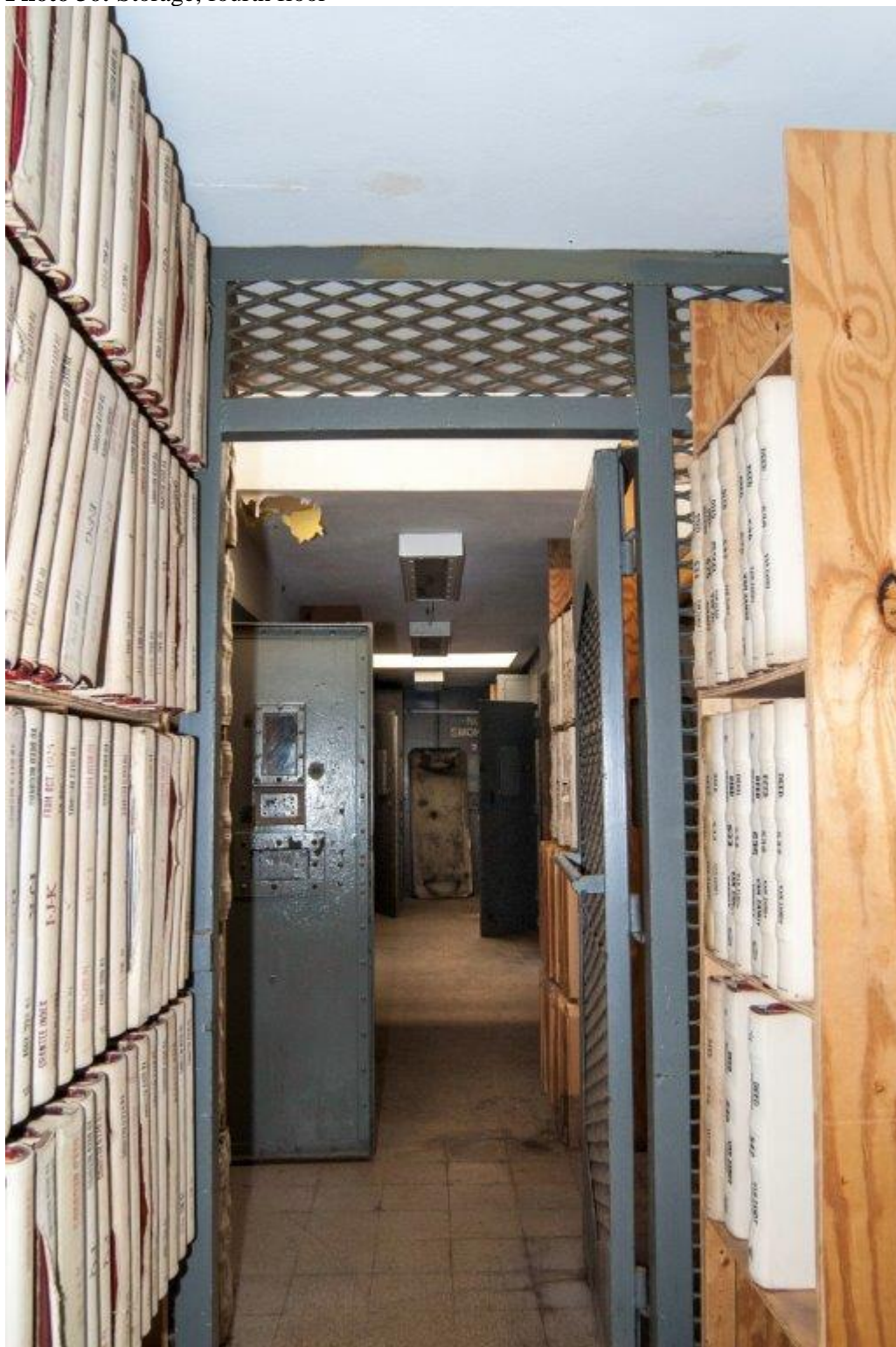
Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

Photo 35: County jail—storage, fourth floor



Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

Photo 36: Storage, fourth floor



Van Zandt County Courthouse, Canton, Van Zandt County, Texas

Photo 37: Cell door, fourth floor

